

The Book of Judges

¹ After the death of Josue the children of Israel consulted the Lord, saying: Who shall go up before us against the Chanaanite, and shall be the leader of the war? ² And the Lord said: Juda shall go up: behold I have delivered the land into his hands. ³ And Juda said to Simeon his brother: Come up with me into my lot, and fight against the Chanaanite, that I also may go along with thee into thy lot. And Simeon went with him. ⁴ And Juda went up, and the Lord delivered the Chanaanite, and the Pherezite into their hands: and they slew of them in Bezec ten thousand men. ⁵ And they found Adonibezec in Bezec, and fought against him, and they defeated the Chanaanite, and the Pherezite. ⁶ And Adonibezec fled: and they pursued after him and took him, and cut off his fingers and toes. ⁷ And Adonibezec said: Seventy kings having their fingers and toes cut off, gathered up the leavings of the meat under my table: as I have done, so hath God requited me. And they brought him to Jerusalem, and he died there. ⁸ And the children of Juda besieging Jerusalem, took it, and put it to the sword, and set the whole city on fire. ⁹ And afterwards they went down and fought against the Chanaanite, who dwelt in the mountains, and in the south, and in the plains. ¹⁰ And Juda going forward against the Chanaanite, that dwelt in Hebron (the name

whereof was in former times Cariath-Arbe) slew Sesai, and Ahiman, and Tholmai: ¹¹ And departing from thence he went to the inhabitants of Dabir, the ancient name of which was Cariath-Sepher, that is, the city of letters. ¹² And Caleb said: He that shall take Cariath-Sepher, and lay it waste, to him will I give my daughter Axa to wife. ¹³ And Othoniel the son of Cenez, the younger brother of Caleb, having taken it, he gave him Axa his daughter to wife. ¹⁴ And as she was going on her way her husband admonished her to ask a field of her father. And as she sighed sitting on her ass, Caleb said to her: What aileth thee? ¹⁵ But she answered: Give me a blessing, for thou hast given me a dry land: give me also a watery land. So Caleb gave her the upper and the nether watery ground. ¹⁶ And the children of the Cinite, the kinsman of Moses, went up from the city of palms, with the children of Juda into the wilderness of his lot, which is at the south side of Arad, and they dwelt with him. ¹⁷ And Juda went with Simeon his brother, and they together defeated the Chanaanites that dwelt in Sephaath, and slew them. And the name of the city was called Horma, that is, Anathema. ¹⁸ And Juda took Gaza with its confines, and Ascalon and Accaron with their confines. ¹⁹ And the Lord was with Juda, and he possessed the hill country: but was not able to destroy the inhabitants of the valley, because they had many chariots armed with scythes. ²⁰ And they gave Hebron to Caleb, as Moses had said, who destroyed out of it the three sons of Enac. ²¹ But the sons of Benjamin did not destroy the Jebusites

that inhabited Jerusalem: and the Jebusite hath dwelt with the sons of Benjamin in Jerusalem until this present day. ²² The house of Joseph also went up against Bethel, and the Lord was with them. ²³ For when they were besieging the city, which before was called Luza, ²⁴ They saw a man coming out of the city, and they said to him: Shew us the entrance into the city, and we will shew thee mercy. ²⁵ And when he had shewn them, they smote the city with the edge of the sword: but that man and all his kindred they let go: ²⁶ Who being sent away, went into the land of Hethim, and built there a city, and called it Luza: which is so called until this day. ²⁷ Manasses also did not destroy Bethsan, and Thanac with their villages, nor the inhabitants of Dor, and Jeblaam, and Mageddo with their villages. And the Chanaanite began to dwell with them. ²⁸ But after Israel was grown strong he made them tributaries, and would not destroy them. ²⁹ Ephraim also did not slay the Chanaanite that dwelt in Gazer, but dwelt with him. ³⁰ Zabulon destroyed not the inhabitants of Cetron, and Naalol: but the Chanaanite dwelt among them, and became their tributaries. ³¹ Aser also destroyed not the inhabitants of Accho, and of Sidon, of Ahalab, and of Achazib, and of Helba, and of Aphec, and of Rohob: ³² And he dwelt in the midst of the Chanaanites the inhabitants of that land, and did not slay them. ³³ Nephtali also destroyed not the inhabitants of Bethsames, and of Bethanath: and he dwelt in the midst of the Chanaanites the inhabitants of the land, and the Bethsamites and

Bethanites were tributaries to him. ³⁴ And the Amorrhite straitened the children of Dan in the mountain, and gave them not place to go down to the plain: ³⁵ And he dwelt in the mountain Hares, that is, of potsherds, in Aialon and Salebim. And the hand of the house of Joseph was heavy upon him, and he became tributary to him. ³⁶ And the border of the Amorrhite was from the ascent of the scorpion, the rock, and the higher places.

2

¹ And an angel of the Lord went up from Galgal to the place of weepers, and said: I made you go out of Egypt, and have brought you into the land for which I swore to your fathers: and I promised that I would not make void my covenant with you for ever: ² On condition that you should not make a league with the inhabitants of this land, but should throw down their altars: and you would not hear my voice: why have you done this? ³ Wherefore I would not destroy them from before your face: that you may have enemies, and their gods may be your ruin. ⁴ And when the angel of the Lord spoke these words to all the children of Israel, they lifted up their voice, and wept. ⁵ And the name of that place was called, The place of weepers, or of tears: and there they offered sacrifices to the Lord. ⁶ And Josue sent away the people, and the children of Israel went every one to his own possession to hold it: ⁷ And they served the Lord all his days, and the days of the ancients, that lived a long time after him, and who knew all the works of the Lord, which he had done for

Israel. ⁸ And Josue the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died, being a hundred and ten years old, ⁹ And they buried him in the borders of his possession in Thamnathsare in mount Ephraim, on the north side of mount Gaas. ¹⁰ And all that generation was gathered to their fathers: and there arose others that knew not the Lord, and the works which he had done for Israel. ¹¹ And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and they served Baalim. ¹² And they left the Lord the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt: and they followed strange gods, and the gods of the people that dwelt round about them, and they adored them: and they provoked the Lord to anger. ¹³ Forsaking him, and serving Baal and Astaroth. ¹⁴ And the Lord being angry against Israel, delivered them into the hands of plunderers: who took them and sold them to their enemies, that dwelt round about: neither could they stand against their enemies: ¹⁵ But whithersoever they meant to go, the hand of the Lord was upon them, as he had said, and as he had sworn to them: and they were greatly distressed. ¹⁶ And the Lord raised up judges, to deliver them from the hands of those that oppressed them: but they would not hearken to them, ¹⁷ Committing fornication with strange gods, and adoring them. They quickly forsook the way, in which their fathers had walked: and hearing the commandments of the Lord, they did all things contrary. ¹⁸ And when the Lord raised them up judges, in their days he was moved to mercy, and heard the groanings of the afflicted,

and delivered them from the slaughter of the oppressors. ¹⁹ But after the judge was dead, they returned, and did much worse things than their fathers had done, following strange gods, serving them and adoring them. They left not their own inventions, and the stubborn way, by which they were accustomed to walk. ²⁰ And the wrath of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he said: Behold this nation hath made void my covenant, which I had made with their fathers, and hath despised to hearken to my voice: ²¹ I also will not destroy the nations which Josue left, when he died: ²² That through them I may try Israel, whether they will keep the way of the Lord, and walk in it, as their fathers kept it, or not. ²³ The Lord therefore left all these nations, and would not quickly destroy them, neither did he deliver them into the hands of Josue.

3

¹ These are the nations which the Lord left, that by them he might instruct Israel, and all that had not known the wars of the Chanaanites: ² That afterwards their children might learn to fight with their enemies, and to be trained up to war: ³ The five princes of the Philistines, and all the Chanaanites, and the Sidonians, and the Hevites that dwelt in mount Libanus, from mount Baal Hermon to the entering into Emath. ⁴ And he left them, that he might try Israel by them, whether they would hear the commandments of the Lord, which he had commanded their fathers by the hand of Moses, or not. ⁵ So the children of Israel dwelt in

the midst of the Chanaanite, and the Hethite, and the Amorrhite, and the Pherezite, and the Hevite, and the Jebusite: ⁶ And they took their daughters to wives, and they gave their own daughters to their sons, and they served their gods. ⁷ And they did evil in the sight of the Lord, and they forgot their God, and served Baalim and Astaroth. ⁸ And the Lord being angry with Israel, delivered them into the hands of Chusan Rasathaim king of Mesopotamia, and they served him eight years. ⁹ And they cried to the Lord, who raised them up a saviour, and delivered them, to wit, Othoniel the son of Cenez, the younger brother of Caleb: ¹⁰ And the spirit of the Lord was in him, and he judged Israel. And he went out to fight, and the Lord delivered into his hands Chusan Rasathaim king of Syria, and he overthrew him. ¹¹ And the land rested forty years, and Othoniel the son of Cenez died. ¹² And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord: who strengthened against them Eglon king of Moab: because they did evil in his sight. ¹³ And he joined to him the children of Ammon, and Amalec: and he went and overthrew Israel, and possessed the city of palm trees. ¹⁴ And the children of Israel served Eglon king of Moab eighteen years: ¹⁵ And afterwards they cried to the Lord, who raised them up a saviour called Aod, the son of Gera, the son of Jemini, who used the left hand as well as the right. And the children of Israel sent presents to Eglon king of Moab by him. ¹⁶ And he made himself a two-edged sword, with a haft in the midst of the length of the palm of the hand, and was girded

therewith under his garment on the right thigh. ¹⁷ And he presented the gifts to Eglon king of Moab. Now Eglon was exceeding fat. ¹⁸ And when he had presented the gifts unto him, he followed his companions that came along with him. ¹⁹ Then returning from Galgal, where the idols were, he said to the king: I have a secret message to thee, O king. And he commanded silence: and all being gone out that were about him, ²⁰ Aod went in to him: now he was sitting in a summer parlour alone, and he said: I have a word from God to thee. And he forthwith rose up from his throne, ²¹ And Aod put forth his left hand, and took the dagger from his right thigh, and thrust it into his belly, ²² With such force that the haft went in after the blade into the wound, and was closed up with the abundance of fat. So that he did not draw out the dagger, but left it in his body as he had struck it in. And forthwith by the secret parts of nature the excrements of the belly came out. ²³ But Aod carefully shutting the doors of the parlour and locking them, ²⁴ Went out by a postern door. And the king's servants going in, saw the doors of the parlour shut, and they said: Perhaps he is easing nature in his summer parlour. ²⁵ And waiting a long time till they were ashamed, and seeing that no man opened the door, they took a key: and opening, they found their lord lying dead on the ground. ²⁶ But Aod, while they were in confusion, escaped, and passed by the place of the idols, from whence he had returned. And he came to Seirath: ²⁷ And forthwith he sounded the trumpet in mount Ephraim: and the children of

Israel went down with him, he himself going in the front. ²⁸ And he said to them: Follow me: for the Lord hath delivered our enemies the Moabites into our hands. And they went down after him, and seized upon the fords of the Jordan, which are in the way to Moab: and they suffered no man to pass over. ²⁹ But they slew of the Moabites at that time, about ten thousand, all strong and Valiant men: none of them could escape. ³⁰ And Moab was humbled that day under the hand of Israel: and the land rested eighty years. ³¹ After him was Samgar the son of Anath, who slew of the Philistines six hundred men with a ploughshare: and he also defended Israel.

4

¹ And the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord after the death of Aod, ² And the Lord delivered them up into the hands of Jaban king of Chanaan, who reigned in Asor: and he had a general of his army named Sisara, and he dwelt in Haroseth of the Gentiles. ³ And the children of Israel cried to the Lord: for he had nine hundred chariots set with scythes, and for twenty years had grievously oppressed them. ⁴ And there was at that time Debbora a prophetess the wife of Lapidoth, who judged the people, ⁵ And she sat under a palm tree, which was called by her name, between Rama and Bethel in mount Ephraim: and the children of Israel came up to her for all judgment. ⁶ And she sent and called Barac the son of Abinoem out of Cedes in Nephthali: and she said to him: The Lord God of Israel hath commanded thee: Go, and lead an army to

mount Thabor, and thou shalt take with thee ten thousand fighting men of the children of Nephtali, and of the children of Zabulon: ⁷ And I will bring unto thee in the place of the torrent Cison, Sisara the general of Jabin's army, and his chariots, and all his multitude, and will deliver them into thy hand. ⁸ And Barac said to her: If thou wilt come with me, I will go: if thou wilt not come with me, I will not go. ⁹ She said to him: I will go indeed with thee, but at this time the victory shall not be attributed to thee, because Sisara shall be delivered into the hand of a woman. Debbora therefore arose, and went with Barac to Cedes. ¹⁰ And he called unto him Zabulon and Nephtali, and went up with ten thousand fighting men, having Debbora in his company. ¹¹ Now Haber the Cinite had some time before departed from the rest of the Cinites his brethren the sons of Hobab, the kinsman of Moses: and had pitched his tents unto the valley which is called Sellnim, and was near Cedes. ¹² And it was told Sisara, that Barac the son of Ablinoem was gone up to mount Thabor: ¹³ And he gathered together his nine hundred chariots armed with scythes, and all his army from Haroseth of the Gentiles to the torrent Cison. ¹⁴ And Debbora said to Barac: Arise, for this is the day wherein the Lord hath delivered Sisara into thy hands: behold he is thy leader. And Barac went down from mount Thabor, and ten thousand fighting men with him. ¹⁵ And the Lord struck a terror into Sisara, and all his chariots, and all his multitude, with the edge of the sword, at the sight of Barac, insomuch that Sisara leaping down

from off his chariot, fled away on foot. ¹⁶ And Barac pursued after the fleeing chariots and the army unto Haroseth of the Gentiles, and all the multitude of the enemies was utterly destroyed. ¹⁷ But Sisara fleeing came to the tent of Jahel the wife of Haber the Cinite, for there was peace between Jabin the king of Asor, and the house of Haber the Cinite. ¹⁸ And Jahel went forth to meet Sisara, and said to him: Come in to me, my lord, come in, fear not. He went in to her tent, and being covered by her with a cloak, ¹⁹ Said to her: Give me, I beseech thee, a little water, for I am very thirsty. She opened a bottle of milk, and gave him to drink, and covered him. ²⁰ And Sisara said to her: Stand before the door of the tent, and when any shall come and inquire of thee, saying: Is there any man here? thou shalt say: There is none. ²¹ So Jahel Haber's wife took a nail of the tent, and taking also a hammer: and going in softly, and with silence, she put the nail upon the temples of his head, and striking it With the hammer, drove it through his brain fast into the ground: and so passing from deep sleep to death, he fainted away and died. ²² And behold Barac came pursuing after Sisara: and Jahel went out to meet him, and said to him: Come, and I will shew thee, the man whom thou seekest. And when he came into her tent, he saw Sisara lying dead, and the nail fastened in his temples. ²³ So God that day humbled Jabin the king of Chanaan before the children of Israel: ²⁴ Who grew daily stronger, and with a mighty hand overpowered Jabin king of Chanaan, till they quite destroyed him.

5

¹ In that day Debhora and Barac son of Abinoem sung, and said: ² O you of Israel, that have willingly offered your lives to danger, bless the Lord. ³ Hear, O ye kings, give ear, ye princes: It is I, it is I, that will sing to the Lord, I will sing to the Lord the God of Israel. ⁴ O Lord, when thou wentest out of Seir, and passedst by the regions of Edom, the earth trembled, and the heavens dropped water. ⁵ The mountains melted before the face of the Lord, and Sinai before the face of the Lord the God of Israel. ⁶ In the days of Samgar the son of Anath, in the days of Jahel the paths rested: and they that went by them, walked through by-ways. ⁷ The valiant men ceased, and rested in Israel: until Debhora arose, a mother arose in Israel. ⁸ The Lord chose new wars, and he himself overthrew the gates of the enemies: a shield and spear was not seen among forty thousand of Israel. ⁹ My heart loveth the princes of Israel: O you that of your own good will offered yourselves to danger, bless the Lord. ¹⁰ Speak, you that ride upon fair asses, and you that sit in judgment, and walk in the way. ¹¹ Where the chariots were dashed together, and the army of the enemies was choked, there let the justices of the Lord be rehearsed, and his clemency towards the brave men of Israel: then the people of the Lord went down to the gates, and obtained the sovereignty. ¹² Arise, arise, O Debhora, arise, arise, and utter a canticle. Arise, Barac, and take hold of thy captives, O son of Abinoem. ¹³ The remnants of the people are saved, the Lord hath fought among the valiant ones.

¹⁴ Out of Ephraim he destroyed them into Amalec, and after him out of Benjamin into thy people, O Amalec: Out of Machir there came down princes, and out of Zabulon they that led the army to fight. ¹⁵ The captains of Issachar were with Debbora, and followed the steps of Barac, who exposed himself to danger, as one going headlong, and into a pit. Ruben being divided against himself, there was found a strife of courageous men. ¹⁶ Why dwellest thou between two borders, that thou mayest hear the bleatings of the flocks? Ruben being divided against himself, there was found a strife of courageous men. ¹⁷ Galaad rested beyond the Jordan, and Dan applied himself to ships: Aser dwelt on the sea shore, and abode in the havens. ¹⁸ But Zabulon and Nephtali offered their lives to death in the region of Merome. ¹⁹ The kings came and fought, the kings of Chanaan fought in Thanach by the waters of Mageddo, and yet they took no spoils. ²⁰ War from heaven was made against them, the stars remaining in their order and courses fought against Sisara. ²¹ The torrent of Cison dragged their carcasses, the torrent of Cadumim, the torrent of Cisoii: tread thou, my soul, upon the strong ones. ²² The hoofs of the horses were broken whilst the stoutest of the enemies fled amain, and fell headlong down. ²³ Curse ye the land of Meroz, said the angel of the Lord: curse the inhabitants thereof, because they came not to the help of the Lord, to help his most valiant men. ²⁴ Blessed among women be Jahel the wife of Haber the Cinite, and blessed be she in her tent. ²⁵ He asked her water and she gave him milk, and

offered him butter in a dish fit for princes. ²⁶ She put her left hand to the nail, and her right hand to the workman's hammer, and she struck Sisara, seeking in his head a place for the wound, and strongly piercing through his temples. ²⁷ At her feet he fell: he fainted, and he died: he rolled before her feet, and he lay lifeless and wretched. ²⁸ His mother looked out at a window, and howled: and she spoke from the dining room: Why is his chariot so long in coming back? Why are the feet of his horses so slow? ²⁹ One that was wiser than the rest of his wives, returned this answer to her mother in law: ³⁰ Perhaps he is now dividing the spoils, and the fairest of the women is chosen out for him: garments of divers colours are given to Sisara for his prey, and furniture of different kinds is heaped together to adorn the necks. ³¹ So let all thy enemies perish, O Lord: but let them that love thee shine, as the sun shineth in his rising. ³² And the land rested for forty years.

6

¹ And the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord: and he delivered them into the hand of Madian seven years. ² And they were grievously oppressed by them. And they made themselves dens and eaves in the mountains, and strong holds to resist. ³ And when Israel had sown, Madian and Amalec, and the rest of the eastern nations came up: ⁴ And pitching their tents among them, wasted all things as they were in the blade even to the entrance of Gaza: and they left nothing at all in Israel for sustenance of life, nor sheep,

nor oxen, nor asses. ⁵ For they and all their flocks came with their tents, and like locusts filled all places, an innumerable multitude of men, and of camels, wasting whatsoever they touched. ⁶ And Israel was humbled exceedingly in the sight of Madian. ⁷ And he cried to the Lord desiring help against the Madianites. ⁸ And he sent unto them a prophet, and he spoke: Thus saith the Lord the God of Israel: I made you to come up out of Egypt, and brought you out of the house of bondage, ⁹ And delivered you out of the hands of the Egyptians, and of all the enemies that afflicted you: and I cast them out at your coming in, and gave you their land. ¹⁰ And I said: I am the Lord your God, fear not the gods of the Amorrhites, in whose land you dwell. And you would not hear my voice. ¹¹ And an angel of the Lord came, and sat under an oak, that was in Ephra, and belonged to Joas the father of the family of Ezri. And when Gedeon his son was threshing and cleansing wheat by the winepress, to flee from Madian, ¹² The angel of the Lord appeared to him, and said: The Lord is with thee, O most valiant of men. ¹³ And Gedeon said to him: I beseech thee, my lord, if the Lord be with us, why have these evils fallen upon us? Where are his miracles, which our fathers have told us of, saying: The Lord brought us Out of Egypt? but now the Lord hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the bands of Madian. ¹⁴ And the Lord looked upon him, and said: Go in this thy strength, and then shalt deliver Israel out of the hand of Madian: know that I have sent thee. ¹⁵ He answered and said: I beseech thee, my lord, wherewith shall I

deliver Israel? Behold my family is the meanest in Manasses, and I am the least in my father's house.

¹⁶ And the Lord said to him: I will be with thee: and thou shalt cut off Madian as one man. ¹⁷ And he said: If I have found grace before thee, give me a sign that it is thou that speakest to me, ¹⁸ And depart not hence, till I return to thee, and bring a sacrifice, and offer it to thee. And he answered: I will wait thy coming. ¹⁹ So Gedeon went in, and boiled a kid, and made unleavened loaves of a measure of flour: and putting the flesh in a basket, and the broth of the flesh into a pot, he carried all under the oak, and presented to him. ²⁰ And the angel of the Lord said to him: Take the flesh and the unleavened loaves, and lay them upon that rock, and pour out the broth thereon. And when he had done so, ²¹ The angel of the Lord put forth the tip of the rod, which he held in his hand, and touched the flesh and the unleavened loaves: and there arose a fire from the rock, and consumed the flesh and the unleavened loaves: and the angel of the Lord vanished out of his sight.

²² And Gedeon seeing that it was the angel of the Lord, said: Alas, my Lord God: for I have seen the angel of the Lord face to face. ²³ And the Lord said to him: Peace be with thee: fear not, thou shalt not die. ²⁴ And Gedeon built there an altar to the Lord, and called it the Lord's peace, until this present day. And when he was yet in Ephra, which is of the family of Ezri, ²⁵ That night the Lord said to him: Take a bullock of thy father's, and another bullock of seven years, and thou shalt destroy the altar of Baal, which is thy father's: and cut down

the grove that is about the altar: ²⁶ And thou shalt build an altar to the Lord thy God in the top of this rock, whereupon thou didst lay the sacrifice before: and thou shalt take the second bullock, and shalt offer a holocaust upon a pile of the wood, which thou shalt cut down out of the grove. ²⁷ Then Gedeon taking ten men of his servants, did as the Lord had commanded him. But fearing his father's house, and the men of that city, he would not do it by day, but did all by night. ²⁸ And when the men of that town were risen in the morning, they saw the altar of Baal destroyed, and the grove cut down, and the second bullock laid upon the altar, which then was built. ²⁹ And they said one to another: Who hath done this? And when they inquired for the author of the fact, it was said: Gedeon the son of Joas did all this. ³⁰ And they said to Joas: Bring out thy son hither, that he may die: because he hath destroyed the altar of Baal, and hath cut down his grove. ³¹ He answered them: Are you the avengers of Baal, that you fight for him? he that is his adversary, let him die before tomorrow light appear: if he be a god, let him revenge himself on him that hath cast down his altar. ³² From that day Gedeon was called Jerobaal, because Joss had said: Let Baal revenge himself on him that hath cast down his altar. ³³ Now all Madian, and Amalec, and the eastern people were gathered together, and passing over the Jordan, camped in the valley of Jezrael. ³⁴ But the spirit of the Lord came upon Gedeon, and he sounded the trumpet and called together the house of Abiezer, to follow him. ³⁵ And he sent messengers into all

Manasses, and they also followed him: and other messengers into Aser and Zabulon and Nephtali, and they came to meet him. ³⁶ And Gedeon said to God: If thou wilt save Israel by my hand, as thou hast said, ³⁷ I will put this fleece of wool on the floor: if there be dew on the fleece only, and it be dry on all the ground beside, I, shall know that by my hand, as thou hast said, thou wilt deliver Israel. ³⁸ And it was so. And rising before day wringing the fleece, he filled a vessel with the dew. ³⁹ And he said again to God: let not thy wrath be kindled against me if I try once more, seeking a sign in the fleece. I pray that the fleece only may be dry, and all the ground wet with dew. ⁴⁰ And God did that night as he had requested: and it was dry on the fleece only, and there was dew on all the ground.

7

¹ Then Jerobaal, who is the same as Gedeon, rising up early and all the people with him, came to the fountain that is called Harad. Now the camp of Madian was in the valley on the north side of the high hill. ² And the Lord said to Gedeon: The people that are with thee are many, and Madian shall not be delivered into their hands: lest Israel should glory against me, and say: I was delivered by my own strength. ³ Speak to the people, and proclaim in the hearing of all, I Whosoever is fearful and timorous, let him return. So two and twenty thousand men went away from mount Galaad and returned home, and only ten thousand remained. ⁴ And the Lord said to Gedeon:

The people are still too many, bring them to the waters, and there I will try them: and of whom I shall say to thee, This shall go with thee, let him go: whom I shall forbid to go, let him return. ⁵ And when the people were come down to the waters, the Lord said to Gedeon: They that shall lap the water with their tongues, as dogs are wont to lap, thou shalt set apart by themselves: but they that shall drink bowing down their knees, shall be on the other side. ⁶ And the number of them that had lapped water, casting it with the hand to their mouth, was three hundred men: and all the rest of the multitude had drunk kneeling. ⁷ And the Lord said to Gedeon: By the three hundred men, that lapped water, I will save you, and deliver Madian into thy hand: but let all the rest of the people return to their place. ⁸ So taking victuals and trumpets according to their number, he ordered all the rest of the multitude to depart to their tents: and he with the three hundred gave himself to the battle. Now the camp of Madian was beneath him in the valley. ⁹ The same night the Lord said to him: Arise, and go down into the camp: because I have delivered them into thy hand. ¹⁰ But if thou be afraid to go alone, let Phara thy servant go down with thee. ¹¹ And when thou shalt hear what they are saying, then shall thy hands be strengthened, and thou shalt go down more secure to the enemies' camp. And he went down with Phara his servant into part of the camp, where was the watch of men in arms. ¹² But Madian and Amalec, and all the eastern people lay scattered in the valley, as a multitude of locusts: their camels also

were innumerable as the sand that lieth on the sea shore. ¹³ And when Gedeon was come, one told his neighbour a dream: and in this manner related what he had seen: I dreamt a dream, and it seemed to me as if a hearth cake of barley bread rolled and came down into the camp of Madian: and when it was come to a tent it struck it, and beat it down flat to the ground. ¹⁴ He to whom he spoke, answered: This is nothing else but the sword of Gedeon the son of Joas a man of Israel. For the Lord hath delivered Madian, and all their camp into his hand. ¹⁵ And when Gedeon had heard the dream, and the interpretation thereof, he adored: and returned to the camp of Israel, and said: Arise, for the Lord hath delivered the camp of Madian into our hands. ¹⁶ And he divided the three hundred men into three parts, and gave them trumpets in their hands, and empty pitchers, and lamps within the pitchers. ¹⁷ And he said to them: What you shall see me do, do you the same: I will go into one part of the camp, and do you as I shall do. ¹⁸ When the trumpet shall sound in my hand, do you also blow the trumpets on every side of the camp. ¹⁹ And Gedeon, and the three hundred men that were with him, went into part of the camp, at the beginning of the midnight watch, and the watchmen being alarmed, they began to sound their trumpets, and to clap the pitchers one against another. ²⁰ And when they sounded their trumpets in three places round about the camp, and had broken their pitchers, they held their lamps in their left hands, and with their right hands the trumpets which they blew,

and they cried out: The sword of the Lord and of Gedeon; ²¹ Standing every man in his place round about the enemies' camp. So all the camp was troubled, and crying out and howling they fled away. ²² And the three hundred men nevertheless persisted sounding the trumpets. And the Lord sent the sword into all the camp, and they killed one another, ²³ Fleeing as far as Bethsetta, and the border of Abelmahula in Tebbath. But the men of Israel shouting from Nephtali and Aser, and from all Manasses pursued after Madian. ²⁴ And Gedeon sent messengers into all mount Ephraim, saying: Come down to meet Madian, and take the waters before them to Bethbera and the Jordan. And all Ephraim shouted, and took the waters before them and the Jordan as far as Bethbera. ²⁵ And having taken two men of Madian, Oreb and Zeb: Oreb they slew in the rock of Oreb, and Zeb in the winepress of Zeb. And they pursued Madian, carrying the heads of Oreb and Zeb to Gedeon beyond the waters of the Jordan.

8

¹ And the men of Ephraim said to him: What is this that thou meanest to do, that thou wouldst not call us when thou wentest to fight against Madian? and they chid him sharply and almost offered violence. ² And he answered them: What could I have done like to that which you have done? Is not one bunch of grapes of Ephraim better than the vintages of Abiezer? ³ The Lord hath delivered into your bands the princes of Madian, Oreb and Zeb: what could I have done like to what you have

done? And when he had said this, their spirit was appeased, with which they swelled against him. ⁴ And when Gedeon was come to the Jordan, he passed over it with the three hundred men, that were with him: who were so weary that they could not pursue after them that fled. ⁵ And he said to the men of Soccoth: Give, I beseech you, bread to the people that is with me, for they are faint: that we may pursue Zebee, and Salmana the kings of Madian. ⁶ The princes of Soccoth answered: Peradventure the palms of the hands of Zebee and Salmana are in thy hand, and therefore thou demandest that we should give bread to thy army. ⁷ And he said to them: When the Lord therefore shall have delivered Zebee and Salmana into my hands, I will thresh your flesh with the thorns and briers of the desert. ⁸ And going up from thence, he came to Phaniel: and he spoke the like things to the men of that place. And they also answered him, as the men of Soccoth had answered. ⁹ He said therefore to them also: When I shall return a conqueror in peace, I will destroy this tower. ¹⁰ But Zebee and Salmana were resting with all their army. For fifteen thousand men were left of all the troops of the eastern people, and one hundred and twenty thousand warriors that drew the sword, were slain. ¹¹ And Gedeon went up by the way of them that dwelt in tents, on the east of Nobe and Jegbaa, and smote the camp of the enemies, who were secure, and suspected no hurt. ¹² And Zebee and Salmana fled, and Gedeon pursued and took them, all their host being put in confusion. ¹³ And returning from the

battle before the sun rising, ¹⁴ He took a boy of the men of Soccoth: and he asked him the names of the princes and ancients of Soccoth, and he described unto him seventy-seven men. ¹⁵ And he came to Soccoth and said to them: Behold Zebee and Salmana, concerning whom you upbraided me, saying: Peradventure the hands of Zebee and Salmana, are in thy hands, and therefore thou demandest that we should give bread to the men that are weary and faint. ¹⁶ So he took the ancients of the city and thorns and briers of the desert, and tore them with the same, and cut in pieces the men of Soccoth. ¹⁷ And he demolished the tower of Phaniel, and slew the men of the city. ¹⁸ And he said to Zebee and Salmana: What manner of men were they whom you slew in Thabor? They answered: They were like thee, and one of them as the son of a king. ¹⁹ He answered them: They were my brethren, the sons of my mother. As the Lord liveth, if you had saved them, I would not kill you. ²⁰ And he said to Jether his eldest son: Arise, and slay them. But he drew not his sword: for he was afraid, being but yet a boy. ²¹ And Zebee and Salmana said: Do thou rise, and run upon us: because the strength of a man is according to his age: Gedeon rose up and slew Zebee and Salmana: and he took the ornaments and bosses, with which the necks of the camels of kings are wont to be adorned. ²² And all the men of Israel said to Gedeon: Rule thou over us and thy son, and thy son's son: because thou hast delivered us from the hand of Madian. ²³ And he said to them: I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule

over you, but the Lord shall rule over you. ²⁴ And he said to them: I desire one request of you: Give me the earlets of your spoils. For the Ismaelites were accustomed to wear golden earlets. ²⁵ They answered: We will give them most willingly. And spreading a mantle on the ground, they cast upon it the earlets of the spoils. ²⁶ And the weight of the earlets that he requested, was a thousand seven hundred sicles of gold, besides the ornaments, and jewels, and purple raiment which the kings of Madian were wont to use, and besides the golden chains that were about the camels' necks. ²⁷ And Gedeon made an ephod thereof, and put it in his city Ephra. And all Israel committed fornication with it, and it became a ruin to Gedeon and to all his house. ²⁸ But Madian was humbled before the children of Israel, neither could they any more lift up their heads: but the land rested for forty years, while Gedeon presided. ²⁹ So Jerobaal the son of Joas went, and dwelt in his own house. ³⁰ And he had seventy sons, who came out of his thigh, for he had many wives. ³¹ And his concubine, that he had in Sichem, bore him a son, whose name was Abimelech. ³² And Gedeon the son of Joas died in a good old age, and was buried in the sepulchre of his father in Ephra of the family of Ezri. ³³ But after Gedeon was dead, the children of Israel turned again, and committed fornication with Baalim. And they made a covenant with Baal, that he should be their god: ³⁴ And they remembered not the Lord their God, who delivered them out of the hands of all their enemies round about: ³⁵ Neither did they shew mercy to

the house of Jerobaal Gedeon, according to all the good things he had done to Israel.

9

¹ And Abimelech the son of Jerobaal went to Sichem to his mother's brethren and spoke to them, and to all the kindred of his mother's father, saying: ² Speak to all the men of Sichem: whether is better for you that seventy men all the sons of Jerobaal should rule over you, or that one man should rule over you? And withal consider that I am your bone, and your flesh. ³ And his mother's brethren spoke of him to all the men of Sichem, all these words, and they inclined their hearts after Abimelech, saying: He is our brother: ⁴ And they gave him seventy weight of silver out of the temple of Baalberith: wherewith he hired to himself men that were needy, and vagabonds, and they followed him. ⁵ And he came to his father's house in Ephra, and slew his brethren the sons of Jerobaal, seventy men, upon one stone: and there remained only Joatham the youngest son of Jerobaal, who was hidden. ⁶ And all the men of Sichem were gathered together, and all the families of the city of Mello: and they went and made Abimelech king, by the oak that stood in Sichem. ⁷ This being told to Joatham, he went and stood on the top of mount Garizim: and lifting up his voice, he cried, and said: Hear me, ye men of Sichem, so may God hear you. ⁸ The trees went to anoint a king over them: and they said to the olive tree: Reign thou over us. ⁹ And it answered: Can I leave my fatness, which both gods and men

make use of, to come to be promoted among the trees? ¹⁰ And the trees said to the fig tree: Come thou and reign over us. ¹¹ And it answered them: Can I leave my sweetness, and my delicious fruits, and go to be promoted among the other trees? ¹² And the trees said to the vine: Come thou and reign over us. ¹³ And it answered them: Can I forsake my wine, that cheereth God and men, and be promoted among the other trees? ¹⁴ And all the trees said to the bramble: Come thou and reign over us. ¹⁵ And it answered them: If indeed you mean to make me king, come ye and rest under my shadow: but if you mean it not, let fire come out from the bramble, and devour the cedars of Libanus. ¹⁶ Now therefore if you have done well, and without sin in appointing Abimelech king over you, and have dealt well with Jerobaal, and with his house, and have made a suitable return for the benefits of him, who fought for you, ¹⁷ And exposed his life to dangers, to deliver you from the hands of Madian, ¹⁸ And you are now risen up against my father's house, and have killed his sons seventy men upon one stone, and have made Abimelech the son of his handmaid king over the inhabitants of Sichem, because he is your brother: ¹⁹ If therefore you have dealt well, and without fault with Jerobaal, and his house, rejoice ye this day in Abimelech, and may he rejoice in you. ²⁰ But if unjustly: let fire come out from him, and consume the inhabitants of Sichem, and the town of Mello: and let fire come out from the men of Sichem, and from the town of Mello, and devour Abimelech. ²¹ And when he had said thus

he fled, and went into Bera: and dwelt there for fear of Abimelech his brother. ²² So Abimelech reigned over Israel for three years. ²³ And the Lord sent a very evil spirit between Abimelech and the inhabitants of Sichem: who began to detest him, ²⁴ And to leave the crime of the murder of the seventy sons of Jerobaal, and the shedding of their blood upon Abimelech their brother, and upon the rest of the princes of the Sichemites, who aided him. ²⁵ And they set an ambush against him on the top of the mountains: and while they waited for his coming, they committed robberies, taking spoils of all that passed by: and it was told Abimelech. ²⁶ And Gaal the son of Obed came with his brethren, and went over to Sichem. And the inhabitants of Sichem taking courage at his coming, ²⁷ Went out into the fields, wasting the vineyards, and treading down the grapes: and singing and dancing they went into the temple of their god, and in their banquets and cups they cursed Abimelech. ²⁸ And Gaal the son of Obed cried: Who is Abimelech, and what is Sichem, that we should serve him? Is he not the son of Jerobaal, and hath made Zebul his servant ruler over the men of Emor the father of Sichem? Why then shall we serve him? ²⁹ Would to God that some man would put this people under my hand, that I might remove Abimelech out of the way. And it was said to Abimelech: Gather together the multitude of an army, and come. ³⁰ For Zebul the ruler of the city, hearing the words of Gaal, the son of Obed, was very angry, ³¹ And sent messengers privately to Abimelech, saying: Behold Gaal the

son of Obed is come into Sichem with his brethren, and endeavoureth to set the city against thee. ³² Arise therefore in the night with the people that is with thee and he hid in the field: ³³ And betimes in the morning at sun rising set upon the city. And when he shall come out against thee with his people, do to him what thou shalt be able. ³⁴ Abimelech therefore arose with all his army by night, and laid ambushes near Sichem in four places. ³⁵ And Gaal the son of Obed went out, and stood in the entrance of the gate of the city. And Abimelech rose up, and all his army with him from the places of the ambushes. ³⁶ And when Gaal saw the people, he said to Zebul: Behold a multitude cometh down from the mountains. And he answered him: Thou seest the shadows of the mountains as if they were the heads of men, and this is thy mistake. ³⁷ Again Gaal said: Behold there cometh people down from the middle of the land, and one troop cometh by the way that looketh towards the oak. ³⁸ And Zebul said to him: Where is now thy mouth wherewith thou saidst? Who is Abimelech that we should serve him? Is not this the people which thou didst despise? Go out, and fight against him. ³⁹ So Gaal went out in the sight of the people of Sichem, and fought against Abimelech, ⁴⁰ Who chased and put him to flight, and drove him to the city: and many were slain of his people, even to the gate of the city: ⁴¹ And Abimelech sat down in Ruma: but Zebul drove Gaal, and his companions out of the city, and would not suffer them to abide in it. ⁴² So the day following the people went out into the field. And it was told Abimelech. ⁴³ And he took his

army, and divided it into three companies, and laid ambushes in the fields. And seeing that the people came out of the city, he arose and set upon them, ⁴⁴ With his own company, assaulting and besieging the city: whilst the two other companies chased the enemies that were scattered about the field. ⁴⁵ And Abimelech assaulted the city all that day: and took it, and killed the inhabitants thereof, and demolished it, so that he sowed salt in it. ⁴⁶ And when they who dwelt in the tower of Sichem had heard this, they went into the temple of their god Berith where they had made a covenant with him, and from thence the place had taken its name, and it was exceeding strong. ⁴⁷ Abimelech also hearing that the men of the tower of Sichem were gathered together, ⁴⁸ Went up into mount Selmon he and all his people with him: and taking an axe, he cut down the bough of a tree, and laying it on his shoulder and carrying it, he said to his companions: What you see me do, do you out of hand. ⁴⁹ So they cut down boughs from the trees, every man as fast as he could, and followed their leader. And surrounding the fort they set it on fire: and so it came to pass that with the smoke and with the fire a thousand persons were killed, men and women together, of the inhabitants of the tower of Sichem. ⁵⁰ Then Abimelech departing from thence came to the town of Thebes, which he surrounded and besieged with his army. ⁵¹ And there was in the midst of the city a high tower, to which both the men and the women were fled together, and all the princes of the city, and having shut and strongly barred the gate, they

stood upon the battlements of the tower to defend themselves. ⁵² And Abimelech coming near the tower, fought stoutly: and approaching to the gate, endeavoured to set fire to it: ⁵³ And behold a certain woman casting a piece of a millstone from above, dashed it against the head of Abimelech, and broke his skull. ⁵⁴ And he called hastily to his armourbearer, and said to him: Draw thy sword, and kill me: lest it should be said that I was slain by a woman. He did as he was commanded, and slew him. ⁵⁵ And when he was dead, all the men of Israel that were with him, returned to their homes. ⁵⁶ And God repaid the evil, that Abimelech had done against his father, killing his seventy brethren. ⁵⁷ The Sichemites also were rewarded for what they had done, and the curse of Joatham the son of Jerobaal came upon them.

10

¹ After Abimelech there arose a ruler in Israel, Thola son of Phua the uncle of Abimelech, a man of Issachar, who dwelt in Samir of mount Ephraim: ² And he judged Israel three and twenty years, and he died and was buried in Samir. ³ To him succeeded Jair the Galaadite, who judged Israel for two and twenty years. ⁴ Having thirty sons that rode on thirty ass colts, and were princes of thirty cities, which from his name were called Havoth Jair, that is, the towns of Jair, until this present day in the land of Galaad. ⁵ And Jair died: and was buried in the place which was called Camon. ⁶ But the children of Israel, adding new sins to their old ones, did evil in the sight of the

Lord, and served idols, Baalim and Astaroth, and the gods of Syria and of Sidon and of Moab and of the children of Ammon and of the Philistines: and they left the Lord, and did not serve him. ⁷ And the Lord being angry with them, delivered them into the hands of the Philistines and of the children of Ammon. ⁸ And they were afflicted, and grievously oppressed for eighteen years, all they that dwelt beyond the Jordan in the land of the Amorrhite, who is in Galaad: ⁹ Insomuch that the children of Ammon passing over the Jordan, wasted Juda and Benjamin and Ephraim: and Israel was distressed exceedingly. ¹⁰ And they cried to the Lord, and said: We have sinned against thee, because we have forsaken the Lord our God, and have served Baalim. ¹¹ And the Lord said to them: Did not the Egyptians and the Amorrhites, and the children of Ammon and the Philistines, ¹² The Sidonians also and Amalec and Chanaan oppress you, and you cried to me, and I delivered you out of their hand? ¹³ And yet you have forsaken me, and have worshipped strange gods: therefore I will deliver you no more: ¹⁴ Go and call upon the gods which you have chosen: let them deliver you in the time of distress. ¹⁵ And the children of Israel said to the Lord: We have sinned, do thou unto us whatsoever pleaseth thee: only deliver us this time. ¹⁶ And saying these things, they cast away out of their coasts all the idols of strange gods and served the Lord their God: and he was touched with their miseries. ¹⁷ And the children of Ammon shouting together, pitched their tents in Galaad: against whom the children of Israel assembled themselves together and camped in

Maspha. ¹⁸ And the princes of Galaad said one to another: Whosoever of us shall first begin to fight against the children of Ammon, he shall be the leader of the people of Galaad.

11

¹ There was at that time Jephthe the Galaadite, a most valiant man and a warrior, the son of a woman that was a harlot, and his father was Galaad. ² Now Galaad had a wife of whom he had sons: who after they were grown up, thrust out Jephthe, saying: Thou canst not inherit in the house of our father, because thou art born of another mother. ³ Then he fled and avoided them and dwelt in the land of Tob: and there were gathered to him needy men, and robbers, and they followed him as their prince. ⁴ In those days the children of Ammon made war against Israel. ⁵ And as they pressed hard upon them, the ancients of Galaad went to fetch Jephthe out of the land of Tob to help them: ⁶ And they said to him: Come thou and be our prince, and fight against the children of Ammon. ⁷ And he answered them: Are not you the men that hated me, and cast me out of my father's house, and now you are come to me constrained by necessity? ⁸ And the princes of Galaad said to Jephthe: For this cause we are now come to thee, that thou mayst go with us, and fight against the children of Ammon, and be head over all the inhabitants of Galaad. ⁹ Jephthe also said to them: If you be come to me sincerely, that I should fight for you against the children of Ammon, and the Lord shall deliver them into

my band, shall I be your prince? ¹⁰ They answered him: The Lord who heareth these things, he himself is mediator and witness that we will do as we have promised. ¹¹ Jephthe therefore went with the princes of Galaad, and all the people made him their prince. And Jephthe spoke all his words before the Lord in Maspha. ¹² And he sent messengers to the king of the children of Ammon, to say in his name, What hast thou to do with me, that thou art come against me, to waste my land? ¹³ And he answered them: I Because Israel took away my land when he came up out of Egypt, from the confines of the Arnon unto the Jaboc and the Jordan: now therefore restore the same peaceably to me. ¹⁴ And Jephthe again sent word by them, and commanded them to say to the king of Ammon: ¹⁵ Thus saith Jephthe: Israel did not take away the land of Moab, nor the land of the children of Ammon: ¹⁶ But when they came up out of Egypt, he walked through the desert to the Red Sea and came into Cades. ¹⁷ And he sent messengers to the king of Edom, saying: Suffer me to pass through thy land. But he would not condescend to his request. He sent also to the king of Moab, who likewise refused to give him passage. He abode therefore in Cades, ¹⁸ And went round the land of Edom at the side, and the land of Moab: and came over against the east coast of the land of Moab, and camped on the other side of the Arnon: and he would not enter the bounds of Moab. ¹⁹ So Israel sent messengers to Sehon king of the Amorrhites, who dwelt in Hesebon, and they said to him: Suffer me to pass through

thy land to the river. ²⁰ But he also despising the words of Israel, suffered him not to pass through his borders: but gathering an infinite multitude, went out against him to Jasa, and made strong opposition. ²¹ And the Lord delivered him with all his army into the hands of Israel, and he slew him, and possessed all the land of the Amorrhite the inhabitant of that country, ²² And all the coasts thereof from the Arnon to the Jaboc, and from the wilderness to the Jordan. ²³ So the Lord the God of Israel destroyed the Amorrhite, his people of Israel fighting against him, and wilt thou now possess this land? ²⁴ Are not those things which thy god Chamos possesseth, due to thee by right? But what the Lord our God hath obtained by conquest, shall be our possession: ²⁵ Unless perhaps thou art better than Balac the son of Sephor king of Moab: or canst shew that he strove against Israel and fought against him, ²⁶ Whereas he hath dwelt in Hesebon, and the villages thereof, and in Aroer, and its villages, and in all the cities near the Jordan, for three hundred years. Why have you for so long a time attempted nothing about this claim? ²⁷ Therefore I do not trespass against thee, but thou wrongest me by declaring an unjust war against me. The Lord be judge and decide this day between Israel and the children of Ammon. ²⁸ And the king of the children of Ammon would not hearken to the words of Jephte, which he sent him by the messengers. ²⁹ Therefore the spirit of the Lord came upon Jephte, and going round Galaad, and Manasses, and Maspha of Galaad,

and passing over from thence to the children of Ammon, ³⁰ He made a vow to the Lord, saying: If thou wilt deliver the children of Ammon into my hands, ³¹ Whosoever shall first come forth out of the doors of my house, and shall meet me when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, the same will I offer a holocaust to the Lord. ³² And Jephthe passed over to the children of Ammon, to fight against them: and the Lord delivered them into his hands. ³³ And he smote them from Aroer till you come to Mennith, twenty cities, and as far as Abel, which is set with vineyards, with a very great slaughter: and the children of Ammon were humbled by the children of Israel. ³⁴ And when Jephthe returned into Maspha to his house, his only daughter met him with timbrels and with dances: for he had no other children. ³⁵ And when he saw her, he rent his garments, and said: Alas! my daughter, thou hast deceived me, and thou thyself art deceived: for I have opened my mouth to the Lord, and I can do no other thing. ³⁶ And she answered him: My father, if thou hast opened thy mouth to the Lord, do unto me whatsoever thou hast promised, since the victory hath been granted to thee, and revenge of thy enemies. ³⁷ And she said to her father: Grant me only this which I desire: Let me go, that I may go about the mountains for two months, and may bewail my virginity with my companions. ³⁸ And he answered her: Go. And he sent her away for two months. And when she was gone with her comrades and companions, she mourned her virginity in the mountains. ³⁹ And the two months

being expired, she returned to her father, and he did to her as he had vowed, and she knew no man. From thence came a fashion in Israel, and a custom has been kept: ⁴⁰ That from year to year the daughters of Israel assemble together, and lament the daughter of Jephthe the Galaadite for four days.

12

¹ But behold there arose a sedition in Ephraim. And passing towards the north, they said to Jephthe: When thou wentest to fight against the children of Ammon, why wouldst thou not call us, that we might go with thee? Therefore we will burn thy house. ² And he answered them: I and my people were at great strife with the children of Ammon: and I called you to assist me, and you would not do it. ³ And when I saw this, I put my life in my own hands, and passed over against the children of Ammon, and the Lord delivered them into my hands. What have I deserved, that you should rise up to fight against me? ⁴ Then calling to him all the men of Galaad, he fought against Ephraim: and the men of Galaad defeated Ephraim, because he had said: Galaad is a fugitive of Ephraim, and dwelleth in the midst of Ephraim and Manasses. ⁵ And the Galaadites secured the fords of the Jordan, by which Ephraim was to return. And when any one of the number of Ephraim came thither in the flight, and said: I beseech you let me pass: the Galaadites said to him: Art thou not an Ephraimite? If he said: I am not: ⁶ They asked him: Say then, Scibboleth, which

is interpreted, An ear of corn. But he answered, Sibboleth, not being able to express an ear of corn by the same letter. Then presently they took him and killed him in the very passage of the Jordan. And there fell at that time of Ephraim two and forty thousand. ⁷ And Jephthe the Galaadite judged Israel six years: and he died, and was buried in his city of Galaad. ⁸ After him Abesan of Bethlehem judged Israel: ⁹ He had thirty sons, and as many daughters, whom he sent abroad, and gave to husbands, and took wives for his sons of the same number, bringing them into his house. And he judged Israel seven years: ¹⁰ And he died, and was buried in Bethlehem. ¹¹ To him succeeded Ahialon a Zabulonite: and he judged Israel ten years: ¹² And he died, and was buried in Zabulon. ¹³ After him Abdon, the son of Illel, a Pharathonite, judged Israel: ¹⁴ And he had forty sons, and of them thirty grandsons, mounted upon seventy ass colts, and he judged Israel eight years: ¹⁵ And he died, and was buried in Pharathon in the land of Ephraim, in the mount of Amalech.

13

¹ And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord: and he delivered them into the hands of the Philistines forty years. ² Now there was a certain man of Saraa, and of the race of Dan, whose name was Manue, and his wife was barren. ³ And an angel of the Lord appeared to her, and said: Thou art barren and without children: but thou shalt conceive and bear a son. ⁴ Now therefore beware and drink no

wine nor strong drink, and eat not any unclean thing. ⁵ Because thou shalt conceive and bear a son, and no razor shall touch his head: for he shall be a Nazarite of God, from his infancy, and from his mother's womb, and he shall begin to deliver Israel from the hands of the Philistines. ⁶ And when she was come to her husband she said to him: A man of God came to me, having the countenance of an angel, very awful. And when I asked him who he was, and whence he came, and by what name he was called, he would not tell me. ⁷ But he answered thus: Behold thou shalt conceive and bear a son: beware thou drink no wine, nor strong drink, nor eat any unclean thing: for the child shall be a Nazarite of God from his infancy, from his mother's womb until the day of his death. ⁸ Then Manue prayed to the Lord, and said: I beseech thee, O Lord, that the mail of God, whom thou didst send, may come again, and teach us what we ought to do concerning the child that shall be born. ⁹ And the Lord heard the prayer of Manue, and the angel of the Lord appeared again to his wife as she was sitting in the field. But Manue her husband was not with her. And when she saw the angel, ¹⁰ She made haste and ran to her husband: and told him saying: Behold the man hath appeared to me whom I saw before. ¹¹ He rose up and followed his wife: and coming to the man, said to him: Art thou he that spoke to the woman? And he answered: I am. ¹² And Manue said to him: When thy word shall come to pass, what wilt thou that the child should do? or from what shall he keep himself? ¹³ And the angel of the Lord said to Manue: From all the things I

have spoken of to thy wife, let her refrain herself: ¹⁴ And let her eat nothing that cometh of the vine, neither let her drink wine or strong drink, nor eat any unclean thing: and whatsoever I have commanded her, let her fulfill and observe. ¹⁵ And Manue said to the angel of the Lord: I beseech thee to consent to my request, and let us dress a kid for thee. ¹⁶ And the angel answered him: If thou press me, I will not eat of thy bread: but if thou wilt offer a holocaust, offer it to the Lord. And Manue knew not it was the angel of the Lord. ¹⁷ And he said to him: What is thy name, that, if thy word shall come to pass, we may honour thee? ¹⁸ And he answered him: Why askest thou my name, which is wonderful? ¹⁹ Then Manue took a kid of the flocks, and the libations, and put them upon a rock, offering to the Lord, who doth wonderful things: and he and his wife looked on. ²⁰ And when the flame from the altar went up towards heaven, the angel of the lord ascended also in the flame. And when Manue and his wife saw this, they fell flat on the ground. ²¹ And the angel of the Lord appeared to them no more. And forthwith Manue understood that it was an angel of the Lord, ²² And he said to his wife: We shall certainly die, because we have seen God. ²³ And his wife answered him: If the Lord had a mind to kill us, he would not have received a holocaust and libations at our hands, neither would he have shewed us all these things, nor have told us the things that are to come. ²⁴ And she bore a son, and called his name Samson. And the child grew, and the Lord blessed him. ²⁵ And the spirit of the Lord

began to be with him in the camp of Dan, between Saraa and Esthaol.

14

¹ Then Samson went down to Thamnatia, and seeing there a woman of the daughters of the Philistines, ² He came up, and told his father and his mother, saying: I saw a woman in Thamnatha of the daughters of the Philistines: I beseech you, take her for me to wife. ³ And his father and mother said to him: Is there no woman among the daughters of thy brethren, or among all my people, that thou wilt take a wife of the Philistines, who are uncircumcised? And Samson said to his father: Take this woman for me, for she hath pleased my eyes. ⁴ Now his parents knew not that the thing was done by the Lord, and that he sought an occasion against the Philistines: for at that time the Philistines had dominion over Israel. ⁵ Then Samson went down with his father and mother to Thamnatha. And when they were come to the vineyards of the town, behold a young lion met him raging and roaring. ⁶ And the spirit of the Lord came upon Samson, and he tore the lion as he would have torn a kid in pieces, having nothing at all in his hand: and he would not tell this to his father and mother. ⁷ And he went down and spoke to the woman that had pleased his eyes. ⁸ And after some days returning to take her, he went aside to see the carcass of the lion, and behold there was a swarm of bees in the mouth of the lion and a honeycomb. ⁹ And when he had taken it in his hands, he went on eating: and coming to his father and mother, he gave them of it, and

they ate: but he would not tell them, that he had taken the honey from the body of the lion. ¹⁰ So his father went down to the woman, and made a feast for his son Samson: for so the young men used to do. ¹¹ And when the citizens of that place saw him, they brought him thirty companions to be with him. ¹² And Samson said to them: I will propose to you a riddle, which if you declare unto me within the seven days of the feast, I will give you thirty shirts, and as many coats: ¹³ But if you shall not be able to declare it, you shall give me thirty shirts and the same number of coats. They answered him: Put forth the riddle that we may hear it. ¹⁴ And he said to them: Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness. And they could not in three days expound the riddle. ¹⁵ And when the seventh day came, they said to the wife of Samson: Soothe thy husband, and persuade him to tell thee what the riddle meaneth. But if thou wilt not do it, we will burn thee, and thy father's house. Have you called us to the wedding on purpose to strip us? ¹⁶ So she wept before Samson and complained, saying: Thou hatest me, and dost not love me: therefore thou wilt not expound to me the riddle which thou hast proposed to the sons of my people. But he answered: I would not tell it to my father and mother, and how can I tell it to thee? ¹⁷ So she wept before him the seven days of the feast: and at length on the seventh day as she was troublesome to him, he expounded it. And she immediately told her countrymen. ¹⁸ And they on the seventh day before the sun went down said to him: What is

sweeter than honey? and what is stronger than a lion? And he said to them: If you had not ploughed with my heifer, you had not found out my riddle. ¹⁹ And the spirit of the Lord came upon him, and he went down to Ascalon, and slew there thirty men, whose garments he took away and gave to them that had declared the riddle. And being exceeding angry he went up to his father's house: ²⁰ But his wife took one of his friends and bridal companions for her husband.

15

¹ And a while after, when the days of the wheat harvest were at hand, Samson came, meaning to visit his wife, and he brought her a kid of the flock. And when he would have gone into her chamber as usual, her father would not suffer him, saying: ² I thought thou hadst hated her, and therefore I gave her to thy friend: but she hath a sister, who is younger and fairer than she, take her to wife instead of her. ³ And Samson answered him: From this day I shall be blameless in what I do against the Philistines: for I will do you evils. ⁴ And he went and caught three hundred foxes, and coupled them tail to tail, and fastened torches between the tails. ⁵ And setting them on fire he let the foxes go, that they might run about hither and thither. And they presently went into the standing corn of the Philistines. Which being set on fire, both the corn that was already carried together, and that which was yet standing, was all burnt, insomuch, that the flame consumed also the vineyards and the oliveyards.

⁶ Then the Philistines said: Who hath done this thing? And it was answered: Samson the son in law of the Thamnathite, because he took away his wife, and gave her to another, hath done these things. And the Philistines went up and burnt both the woman and her father. ⁷ But Samson said to them: Although you have done this, yet will I be revenged of you, and then I will be quiet. ⁸ And he made a great slaughter of them, so that in astonishment they laid the calf of the leg upon the thigh. And going down he dwelt in a cavern of the rock Etam. ⁹ Then the Philistines going up into the land of Juda, camped in the place which afterwards was called Lechi, that is, the Jawbone, where their army was spread. ¹⁰ And the men of the tribe of Juda said to them: Why are you come up against us? They answered: We are come to bind Samson, and to pay him for what he hath done against us. ¹¹ Wherefore three thousand men of Juda, went down to the cave of the rock Etam, and said to Samson: Knowest thou not that the Philistines rule over us? Why wouldst thou do thus? And he said to them: As they did to me, so have I done to them. ¹² And they said to him, We are come to bind thee and to deliver thee into the hands of the Philistines. And Samson said to them: Swear to me, and promise me, that you will not kill me. ¹³ They said: We will not kill thee: but we will deliver thee up bound. And they bound him with two new cords, and brought him from the rock Etam. ¹⁴ Now when he was come to the place of the Jawbone, and the Philistines shouting went to meet him, the spirit of the Lord

came strongly upon him: and as the flax is wont to be consumed at the approach of fire, so the bands with which he was bound were broken and loosed. ¹⁵ And finding a jawbone, even the jawbone of an ass which lay there, catching it up, he slew therewith a thousand men. ¹⁶ And he said: With the jawbone of an ass, with the jaw of the colt of asses I have destroyed them, and have slain a thousand men. ¹⁷ And when he had ended these words singing, he threw the jawbone out of his hand, and called the name of that place Ramathlechi, which is interpreted the lifting up of the jawbone. ¹⁸ Arid being very thirsty, he cried to the Lord, and said: Thou hast given this very great deliverance and victory into the hand of thy servant: and behold I die for thirst, and shall fall into the hands of the uncircumcised. ¹⁹ Then the Lord opened a great tooth in the jaw of the ass, and waters issued out of it. And when he had drank them he refreshed his spirit, and recovered his strength. Therefore the name of that place was called, The Spring of him that invoked from the jawbone, until this present day. ²⁰ And he judged Israel in the days of the Philistines twenty years.

16

¹ He went also into Gaza, and saw there a woman a harlot, and went in unto her. ² And when the Philistines had heard this, and it was noised about among them, that Samson was come into the city, they surrounded him, setting guards at the gate of the city, and watching there all the night in silence, that in the morning they might kill him as he went out. ³ But Samson slept till

midnight, and then rising he took both the doors of the gate, with the posts thereof, and the bolt, and laying them on his shoulders, carried them up to the top of the hill, which looketh towards Hebron. ⁴ After this he loved a woman, who dwelt in the valley of Sorec, and she was called Dalila. ⁵ And the princes of the Philistines came to her, and said: Deceive him, and learn of him wherein his great strength lieth, and how we may be able to overcome him, to bind and afflict him: which if thou shalt do, we will give thee every one of us eleven hundred pieces of silver. ⁶ And Dalila said to Samson: Tell me, I beseech thee, wherein thy greatest strength lieth, and what it is wherewith if thou wert bound thou couldst not break loose. ⁷ And Samson answered her: If I shall be bound with seven cords made of sinews not yet dry, but still moist, I shall be weak like other men. ⁸ And the princes of the Philistines brought unto her seven cords, such is he spoke of, with which she bound him; ⁹ Men lying privately in wait with her, and in the chamber expecting the event of the thing, and she cried out to him: The Philistines are upon thee, Samson. And he broke the bands, as a man would break a thread of tow twined with spittle, when it smelleth the fire: so it was not known wherein his strength lay. ¹⁰ And Dalila said to him: Behold thou hast mocked me, and hast told me a false thing: but now at least tell me wherewith thou mayest be bound. ¹¹ And he answered her: If I shall be bound with new ropes, that were never in work, I shall be weak and like other men. ¹² Dalila bound him again with

these, and cried out: The Philistines are upon thee, Samson, there being an ambush prepared for him in the chamber. But he broke the bands like threads of webs. ¹³ And Dalila said to him again: How long dost thou deceive me, and tell me lies? Shew me wherewith thou mayest be bound. And Samson answered her: If thou plattest the seven locks of my head with a lace, and tying them round about a nail fastenest it in the ground, I shall be weak. ¹⁴ And when Dalila had done this, she said to him: The Philistines are upon thee, Samson. And awaking out of his sleep he drew out the nail with the hairs and the lace. ¹⁵ And Dalila said to him: How dost thou say thou lovest me, when thy mind is not with me? Thou hast told me lies these three times, and wouldst not tell me wherein thy great strength lieth. ¹⁶ And when she pressed him much, and continually hung upon him for many days, giving him no time to rest, his soul fainted away, and was wearied even until death. ¹⁷ Then opening the truth of the thing, he said to her: The razor hath never come upon my head, for I am a Nazarite, that is to say, consecrated to God from my mother's womb: if my head be shaven, my strength shall depart from me, and I shall become weak, and shall be like other men. ¹⁸ Then seeing that he had discovered to her all his mind, she sent to the princes of the Philistines, saying: Come up this once more, for now he hath opened his heart to me. And they went up taking with them the money which they had promised. ¹⁹ But she made him sleep upon her knees, and lay his head in her bosom. And she called a barber, and shaved

his seven locks, and began to drive him away, and thrust him from her: for immediately his strength departed from him. ²⁰ And she said: The Philistines are upon thee, Samson. And awaking from sleep, he said in his mind: I will go out as I did before, and shake myself, not knowing that the Lord was departed from him. ²¹ Then the Philistines seized upon him, and forthwith pulled out his eyes, and led him bound in chains to Gaza, and shutting him up in prison made him grind. ²² And now his hair began to grow again. ²³ And the princes of the Philistines assembled together, to offer great sacrifices to Dagon their god, and to make merry, saying: Our god hath delivered our enemy Samson into our hands. ²⁴ And the people also seeing this, praised their god, and said the same: Our god hath delivered our adversary into our bands, him that destroyed our country and killed very many. ²⁵ And rejoicing in their feasts, when they had now taken their good cheer, they commanded that Samson should be called, and should play before them. And being brought out of prison he played before them, and they made him stand between two pillars. ²⁶ And he said to the lad that guided his steps: Suffer me to touch the pillars which support the whole house, and let me lean upon them, and rest a little. ²⁷ Now the house was full of men and women, and all the princes of the Philistines were there. Moreover about three thousand persons of both sexes from the roof and the higher part of the house, were beholding Samson's play. ²⁸ But he called upon the Lord, saying: O Lord God, remember me, and

restore to me now my former strength, O my God, that I may revenge myself on my enemies, and for the loss of my two eyes I may take one revenge. ²⁹ And laying hold on both the pillars on which the house rested, and holding the one with his right hand, and the other with his left, ³⁰ He said: Let me die with the Philistines. And when he had strongly shook the pillars, the house fell upon all the princes, and the rest of the multitude that was there: and he killed many more at his death, than he had killed before in his life. ³¹ And his brethren and all his kindred, going down took his body, and buried it between Saraa and Esthaol in the buryingplace of his father Manue: and he judged Israel twenty years.

17

¹ There was at that time a man of mount Ephraim whose name was Michas, ² Who said to his mother: The eleven hundred pieces of silver, which thou hadst put aside for thyself, and concerning which thou didst swear in my hearing, behold I have, and they are with me. And she said to him: Blessed be my son by the Lord. ³ So he restored them to his mother, who said to him: I have consecrated and vowed this silver to the Lord, that my son may receive it at my hand, and make a graven and a molten god, so now I deliver it to thee. ⁴ And he restored them to his mother: and she took two hundred pieces of silver and gave them to the silversmith, to make of them a graven and a molten god, which was in the house of Michas. ⁵ And he separated also therein a little temple for the god, and made an ephod, and

theraphim, that is to say, a priestly garment, and idols: and he filled the hand of one of his sons, and he became his priest. ⁶ In those days there was no king in Israel, but every one did that which seemed right to himself. ⁷ There was also another young man of Bethlehem Juda, of the kindred thereof: and he was a Levite, and dwelt there. ⁸ Now he went out from the city of Bethlehem, and desired to sojourn wheresoever he should find it convenient for him. And when he was come to mount Ephraim, as he was on his journey, and had turned aside a little into the house of Michas, ⁹ He was asked by him whence he came. And he answered: I am a Levite of Bethlehem Juda, and I am going to dwell where I can, and where I shall find a place to my advantage. ¹⁰ And Michas said: Stay with me, and be unto me a father and a priest, and I will give thee every year ten pieces of silver, and a double suit of apparel, and thy victuals. ¹¹ He was content, and abode with the man, and was unto him as one of his sons. ¹² And Michas filled his hand, and had the young man with him, for his priest, saying: ¹³ Now I know God will do me good, since I have a priest of the race of the Levites.

18

¹ In those days there was no king in Israel, and the tribe of Dan sought them an inheritance to dwell in: for unto that day they had not received their lot among the other tribes. ² So the children of Dan sent five most valiant men of their stock and family from Saraa and Esthaol, to spy out the land, and to view it diligently: and they said to

them: Go, and view the land. They went on their way, and when they came to mount Ephraim, they went into the house of Michas, and rested there: ³ And knowing the voice of the young man the Levite, and lodging with him, they said to him: Who brought thee hither? what dost thou here? why wouldst thou come hither? ⁴ He answered them: Michas hath done such and such things for me, and hath hired me to be his priest. ⁵ Then they desired him to consult the Lord, that they might know whether their journey should be prosperous, and the thing should have effect. ⁶ He answered them: Go in peace, the Lord looketh on your way, and the journey that you go. ⁷ So the five men going on came to Lais: and they saw how the people dwelt therein without any fear, according to the custom of the Sidonians, secure and easy, having no man at all to oppose them, being very rich, and living separated, at a distance from Sidon and from all men. ⁸ And they returned to their brethren in Saraa and Esthaol, who asked them what they had done? to whom they answered: ⁹ Arise, and let us go up to them: for we have seen the land which is exceeding rich and fruitful: neglect not, lose no time: let us go and possess it, there will be no difficulty. ¹⁰ We shall come to a people that is secure, into a spacious country, and the Lord will deliver the place to us, in which there is no want of any thing that groweth on the earth. ¹¹ There went therefore of the kindred of Dan, to wit, from Saraa and Esthaol, six hundred men, furnished with arms for war, ¹² And going up they lodged

in Cariathiarim of Juda: which place from that time is called the camp of Dan, and is behind Cariathiarim. ¹³ From thence they passed into mount Ephraim. And when they were come to the house of Michas, ¹⁴ The five men, that before had been sent to view the land of Lais, said to the rest of their brethren: You know that in these houses there is an ephod, and theraphim, and a graven, and a molten god: see what you are pleased to do. ¹⁵ And when they had turned a little aside, they went into the house of the young man the Levite, who was in the house of Michas: and they saluted him with words of peace. ¹⁶ And the six hundred men stood before the door, appointed with their arms. ¹⁷ But they that were gone into the house of the young man, went about to take away the graven god, and the ephod, and the theraphim, and the molten god, and the priest stood before the door, the six hundred valiant men waiting not far off. ¹⁸ So they that were gone in took away the graven thing, the ephod, and the idols, and the molten god. And the priest said to them: What are you doing? ¹⁹ And they said to him: Hold thy peace and put thy finger on thy mouth and come with us, that we may have thee for a father, and a priest. Whether is better for thee, to be a priest in the house of one man, or in a tribe and family in Israel? ²⁰ When he had heard this, he agreed to their words, and took the ephod, and the idols, and the graven god, and departed with them. ²¹ And when they were going forward, and had put before them the children and the cattle and all that was valuable, ²² And were now at a distance

from the house of Michas, the men that dwelt in the houses of Michas gathering together followed them, ²³ And began to shout out after them. They looked back, and said to Michas: What aileth thee? Why dost thou cry? ²⁴ And he answered: You have taken away my gods which I have made me and the priest, and all that I have, and do you say: What aileth thee? ²⁵ And the children of Dan said to him: See thou say no more to us, lest men enraged come upon thee, and thou perish with all thy house. ²⁶ And so they went on the journey they had begun. But Michas seeing that they were stronger than he, returned to his house. ²⁷ And the six hundred men took the priest, and the things we spoke of before, and came to Lais to a people that was quiet and secure, and smote them with the edge of the sword: and the city was burnt with fire, ²⁸ There being no man at all who brought them any succour, because they dwelt far from Sidon, and had no society or business with any man. And the city was in the land of Rohob: and they rebuilt it and dwelt therein. ²⁹ Calling the name of the city Dan after the name of their father, who was the son of Israel, which before was called Lais. ³⁰ And they set up to themselves the graven idol, and Jonathan the son of Gersam the son of Moses, he and his sons were priests in the tribe of Dan, until the day of their captivity. ³¹ And the idol of Michas remained with them all the time that the house of God was in Silo. In those days there was no king in Israel.

19

¹ There was a certain Levite, who dwelt on the side of mount Ephraim, who took a wife of Bethlehem Juda: ² And she left him and returned to her father's house in Bethlehem, and abode with him four months. ³ And her husband followed her, willing to be reconciled with her, and to speak kindly to her, and to bring her back with him, having with him a servant and two asses: and she received him, and brought him into her father's house. And when his father in law had heard this, and had seen him, he met him with joy, ⁴ And embraced the man. And the son in law tarried in the house of his father in law three days, eating with him and drinking familiarly. ⁵ But on the fourth day arising early in the morning he desired to depart. But his father in law kept him, and said to him: Taste first a little bread, and strengthen thy stomach, and so thou shalt depart. ⁶ And they sat down together, and ate and drank. And the father of the young woman said to his son in law: I beseech thee to stay here today, and let us make merry together. ⁷ But he rising up began to be for departing. And nevertheless his father in law earnestly pressed him, and made him stay with him. ⁸ But when morning was come, the Levite prepared to go on his journey. And his father in law said to him again: I beseech thee to take a little meat, and strengthening thyself, till the day be farther advanced, afterwards thou mayest depart. And they ate together. ⁹ And the young man arose to set forward with his wife and servant. And his father in law spoke to him again:

Consider that the day is declining, and draweth toward evening: tarry with me today also, and spend the day in mirth, and tomorrow thou shalt depart, that thou mayest go into thy house. ¹⁰ His son in law would not consent to his words: but forthwith went forward and came over against Jebus, which by another name is called Jerusalem, leading with him two asses laden, and his concubine. ¹¹ And now they were come near Jebus, and the day was far spent: and the servant said to his master: Come, I beseech thee, let us turn into the city of the Jebusites, and lodge there. ¹² His master answered him: I will not go into the town of another nation, who are not of the children of Israel, but I will pass over to Gabaa: ¹³ And when I shall come thither, we will lodge there, or at least in the city of Rama. ¹⁴ So they passed by Jebus, and went on their journey, and the sun went down upon them when they were by Gabaa, which is in the tribe of Benjamin: ¹⁵ And they turned into it, to lodge there. And when they were come in, they sat in the street of the city, for no man would receive them to lodge. ¹⁶ And behold they saw an old man, returning out of the field and from his work in the evening, and he also was of mount Ephraim, and dwelt as a stranger in Gabaa; but the men of that country were the children of Jemini. ¹⁷ And the old man lifting up his eyes, saw the man sitting with his bundles in the street of the city, and said to him: Whence comest thou? and whither goest thou? ¹⁸ He answered him: We came out from Bethlehem Juda, and we are going to our home, which is on the side of mount Ephraim,

from whence we went to Bethlehem: and now we go to the house of God, and none will receive us under his roof: ¹⁹ We have straw and hay for provender of the asses, and bread and wine for the use of myself and of thy handmaid, and of the servant that is with me: we want nothing but lodging. ²⁰ And the old man answered him: Peace be with thee: I will furnish all things that are necessary: only I beseech thee, stay not in the street. ²¹ And he brought him into his house, and gave provender to his asses: and after they had washed their feet, he entertained them with a feast. ²² While they were making merry, and refreshing their bodies with meat and drink, after the labour of the journey, the men of that city, sons of Belial, (that is, without yoke,) came and beset the old man's house, and began to knock at the door, calling to the master of the house, and saying: Bring forth the man that came into thy house, that we may abuse him. ²³ And the old man went out to them, and said: Do not so, my brethren, do not so wickedly: because this man is come into my lodging, and cease I pray you from this folly. ²⁴ I have a maiden daughter, and this man hath a concubine, I will bring them out to you, and you may humble them, and satisfy your lust: only, I beseech you, commit not this crime against nature on the man. ²⁵ They would not be satisfied with his words; which the man seeing, brought out his concubine to them, and abandoned her to their wickedness: and when they had abused her all the night, they let her go in the morning. ²⁶ But the woman, at the dawning

of the day, came to the door of the house where her lord lodged, and there fell down. ²⁷ And in the morning the man arose, and opened the door that he might end the journey he had begun: and behold his concubine lay before the door with her hands spread on the threshold. ²⁸ He thinking she was taking her rest, said to her: Arise, and let us be going. But as she made no answer, perceiving she was dead, he took her up, and laid her upon his ass, and returned to his house. ²⁹ And when he was come home he took a sword, and divided the dead body of his wife with her bones into twelve parts, and sent the pieces into all the borders of Israel. ³⁰ And when every one had seen this, they all cried out: There was never such a thing done in Israel from the day that our fathers came up out of Egypt, until this day: give sentence, and decree in common what ought to be done.

20

¹ Then all the children of Israel went out and gathered together as one man from Dan to Bersabee, with the land of Galaad, to the Lord in Maspha: ² And all the chiefs of the people, and all the tribes of Israel met together in the assembly of the people of God, four hundred thousand footmen fit for war. ³ (Nor were the children of Benjamin ignorant that the children of Israel were come up to Maspha.) And the Levite the husband of the woman that was killed, being asked, how so great a wickedness had been committed, ⁴ Answered: I came into Gabaa of Benjamin with my wife, and there I lodged: ⁵ And behold the men

of that city in the night beset the house wherein I was, intending to kill me, and abused my wife with an incredible fury of lust, so that at last she died. ⁶ And I took her and cut her in pieces, and sent the parts into all the borders of your possession: because there never was so heinous a crime, and so great an abomination committed in Israel. ⁷ You are all here, O children of Israel, determine what you ought to do. ⁸ And all the people standing, answered as by the voice of one man: We will not return to our tents, neither shall any one of us go into his own house: ⁹ But this we will do in common against Gabaa: ¹⁰ We will take ten men of a hundred out of all the tribes of Israel, and a hundred out of a thousand, and a thousand out of ten thousand, to bring victuals for the army, that we might fight against Gabaa of Benjamin, and render to it for its wickedness, what it deserveth. ¹¹ And all Israel were gathered together against the city, as one man, with one mind, and one counsel: ¹² And they sent messengers to all the tribe of Benjamin to say to them: Why hath so great an abomination been found among you? ¹³ Deliver up the men of Gabaa, that have committed this heinous crime, that they may die, and the evil may be taken away out of Israel. But they would not hearken to the proposition of their brethren the children of Israel: ¹⁴ But out of all the cities which were of their lot, they gathered themselves together into Gabaa, to aid them, and to fight against the whole people of Israel. ¹⁵ And there were found of Benjamin five and twenty thousand men that drew the sword, besides the

inhabitants of Gabaa, ¹⁶ Who were seven hundred most valiant men, fighting with the left hand as well as with the right: and slinging stones so sure that they could hit even a hair, and not miss by the stone's going on either side. ¹⁷ Of the men of Israel also, beside the children of Benjamin, were found four hundred thousand that drew swords, and were prepared to fight. ¹⁸ And they arose and came to the house of God, that is, to Silo: and they consulted God, and said: Who shall be in our army the first to go to the battle against the children of Benjamin? And the Lord answered them: Let Juda be your leader. ¹⁹ And forthwith the children of Israel rising in the morning, camped by Gabaa: ²⁰ And going out from thence to fight against Benjamin, began to assault the city. ²¹ And the children of Benjamin coming out of Gabaa, slew of the children of Israel that day two and twenty thousand men. ²² Again Israel trusting in their strength and their number, set their army in array in the same place, where they had fought before: ²³ Yet so that they first went up and wept before the Lord until night: and consulted him, and said: Shall I go out any more to fight against the children of Benjamin my brethren, or not? And he answered them: Go up against them, and join battle. ²⁴ And when the children of Israel went out the next day to fight against the children of Benjamin, ²⁵ The children of Benjamin sallied forth out of the gates of Gabaa: and meeting them made so great a slaughter of them, as to kill eighteen thousand men that drew the sword. ²⁶ Wherefore all the children of Israel came to

the house of God, and sat and wept before the Lord: and they fasted that day till the evening, and offered to him holocausts, and victims of peace offerings,²⁷ And inquired of him concerning their state. At that time the ark of the covenant of the Lord was there,²⁸ And Phinees the son of Eleazar the son of Aaron was over the house. So they consulted the Lord and said: Shall we go out any more to fight against the children of Benjamin our brethren, or shall we cease? And the Lord said to them: Go up, for tomorrow I will deliver them into your hands.²⁹ And the children of Israel set ambushes round about the city of Gabaa:³⁰ And they drew up their army against Benjamin the third time, as they had done the first and second.³¹ And the children of Benjamin boldly issued out of the city, and seeing their enemies flee, pursued them a long way, so as to wound and kill some of them, as they had done the first and second day, whilst they fled by two highways, whereof one goeth up to Bethel, and the other to Gabaa, and they slew about thirty men:³² For they thought to cut them off, as they did before. But they artfully feigning a flight, designed to draw them away from the city, and by their seeming to flee to bring them to the highways aforesaid.³³ Then all the children of Israel rising up out of the places where they were, set their army in battle array, in the place which is called Baalthamar. The ambushes also which were about the city, began by little and little to come forth,³⁴ And to march from the west side of the city. And other ten thousand men chosen out of all Israel attacked the inhabitants

of the city. And the battle grew hot against the children of Benjamin: and they understood not that present death threatened them on every side. ³⁵ And the Lord defeated them before the children of Israel, and they slew of them in that day five and twenty thousand, and one hundred, all fighting men and that drew the sword. ³⁶ But the children of Benjamin when they saw themselves to be too weak, began to flee. Which the children of Israel seeing, gave them place to flee, that they might come to the ambushes that were prepared, which they had set near the city. ³⁷ And they that were in ambush arose on a sudden out of their coverts, and whilst Benjamin turned their backs to the slayers, went into the city, and smote it with the edge of the sword. ³⁸ Now the children of Israel had given a sign to them, whom they had laid in ambushes, that after they had taken the city, they should make a fire: that by the smoke rising on high, they might shew that the city was taken. ³⁹ And when the children of Israel saw this in the battle (for the children of Benjamin thought they fled and pursued them vigorously, killing thirty men of their army) ⁴⁰ And perceived as it were a pillar of smoke rise up from the city; and Benjamin looking back, saw that the city was taken, and that the flames ascended on high: ⁴¹ They that before had made as if they fled, turning their faces stood bravely against them; which the children of Benjamin seeing, turned their backs, ⁴² And began to go towards the way of the desert, the enemy pursuing them thither also. And they that fired the city came also out to meet them. ⁴³ And

so it was, that they were slain on both sides by the enemies, and there was no rest of their men dying. They fell and were beaten down on the east side of the city Gabaa. ⁴⁴ And they that were slain in the same place were eighteen thousand men, all most valiant soldiers. ⁴⁵ And when they that remained of Benjamin saw this, they fled into the wilderness and made towards the rock that is called Remmon. In that flight, also as they were straggling and going different ways, they slew of them five thousand men. And as they went farther, they still pursued them, and slew also other two thousand. ⁴⁶ And so it came to pass, that all that were slain of Benjamin in divers places, were five and twenty thousand fighting men, most valiant for war. ⁴⁷ And there remained of all the number of Benjamin only six hundred men that were able to escape, and flee to the wilderness: and they abode in the rock Remmon four months. ⁴⁸ But the children of Israel returning, put all the remains of the city to the sword, both men and beasts, and all the cities and villages of Benjamin were consumed with devouring flames.

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¹ Now the children of Israel had also sworn in Maspha, saying: None of us shall give of his daughters to the children of Benjamin to wife. ² And they all came to the house of God in Silo, and abiding before him till the evening, lifted up their voices, and began to lament and weep, saying: ³ O Lord God of Israel, why is so great an evil come to pass in thy people, that this day one

tribe should be taken away from among us? ⁴ And rising early the next day, they built an altar: and offered there holocausts, and victims of peace, and they said: ⁵ Who is there among all the tribes of Israel that came not up with the army of the Lord? for they had bound themselves with a great oath, when they were in Maspha, that whosoever were wanting should be slain. ⁶ And the children of Israel being moved with repentance for their brother Benjamin, began to say: One tribe is taken away from Israel. ⁷ Whence shall they take wives? For we have all in general sworn, not to give our daughters to them. ⁸ Therefore they said: Who is thereof all the tribes of Israel, that came not up to the Lord to Maspha. And behold the inhabitants of Jabes Galaad were found not to have been in that army. ⁹ (At that time also when they were in Silo, no one of them was found there.) ¹⁰ So they sent ten thousand of the most valiant men, and commanded them, saying: Go and put the inhabitants of Jabes Galaad to the sword, with their wives and their children. ¹¹ And this is what you shall observe: Every male, and all women that have known men, you shall kill, but the virgins you shall save. ¹² And there were found of Jabes Galaad four hundred virgins, that had not known the bed of a man, and they brought them to the camp Silo, into the land of Chanaan. ¹³ And they sent messengers to the children of Benjamin, that were in the rock Remmon, and commanded them to receive them in peace. ¹⁴ And the children of Benjamin came at that time, and wives were given them of the daughters of Jabes Galaad: but they

found no others, whom they might give in like manner. ¹⁵ And all Israel was very sorry, and repented for the destroying of one tribe out of Israel. ¹⁶ And the ancients said: What shall we do with the rest, that have not received wives? for all the women in Benjamin are dead. ¹⁷ And we must use all care, and provide with great diligence, that one tribe be not destroyed out of Israel. ¹⁸ For as to our own daughters we cannot give them, being bound with an oath and a curse, whereby we said: Cursed be he that shall give Benjamin any of his daughters to wife. ¹⁹ So they took counsel, and said: Behold there is a yearly solemnity of the Lord in Silo, which is situate on the north of the city of Bethel, and on the east side of the way, that goeth from Bethel to Sichem, and on the south of the town of Lebona. ²⁰ And they commanded the children of Benjamin, and said: Go, and lie hid in the vineyards, ²¹ And when you shall see the daughters of Silo come out, as the custom is, to dance, come ye on a sudden out of the vineyards, and catch you every man his wife among them, and go into the land of Benjamin. ²² And when their fathers and their brethren shall come, and shall begin to complain against you, and to chide, we will say to them: Have pity on them for they took them not away as by the right of war or conquest, but when they asked to have them, you gave them not, and the fault was committed on your part. ²³ And the children of Benjamin did, as they had been commanded: and according to their number, they carried off for themselves every man his wife of them that were dancing:

and they went into their possession and built up their cities, and dwelt in them. ²⁴The children of Israel also returned by their tribes, and families, to their dwellings. In those days there was no king in Israel: but every one did that which seemed right to himself.

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